

REMARKS

This application has been reviewed in light of the Office Action dated April 5, 2006. Claims 5, 6, 10-18, and 20-30 are presented for examination. Claim 19 has been cancelled, without prejudice or disclaimer of the subject matter presented therein. Claims 5, 13, 18, and 22 have been amended to define still more clearly what Applicants regard as their invention. New Claims 27-30 have been added to provide Applicants with a more complete scope of protection. Support for the amendments and newly-added claims can be found in the original specification. Claims 5, 13, 18, 22, and 27-30 are in independent form. Favorable reconsideration is requested.

Rejection

Claims 5, 6 and 10-26 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over the publication to Kitamura et al. (U.S. Patent Application Publication No. 2002/0031972) or the patent to Dean et al. (U.S. Patent No. 6,645,028).

Interview Summary and Response to Rejection

In response to the rejection, Applicants' undersigned representative conducted an interview with the Examiner on July 17, 2006.

At the interview, the Examiner agreed that the shifting of an F-N plot was not shown or suggested by the citations to Kitamura et al. and Dean et al. As a result, the Examiner agreed that he would withdraw the rejection if the independent claims were amended to recite the shifting of the F-N plot, as shown in the present amendments to

independent Claims 5, 13, 18, and 22. In addition, the Examiner indicated that he would also favorably consider the additional limitation that an electron source or an electron-emitting device is operated below the bending point of the F-N plot, i.e., the voltage above which the absolute value of an inclination in an F-N plot of an electron-emitting characteristic of the first electron-emitting member decreases. Accordingly, Applicants have added new Claims 27-30, which are similar to independent Claims 5, 13, 18, and 22, except that they 1) also relate to the operating of an electron source or electron-emitting device, and 2) also recite the operating of the electron source or electron-emitting device by applying a voltage between a counter electrode and a cathode electrode having values restricted to being below the voltage above which the absolute value of an inclination in an F-N plot of an electron-emitting characteristic of the first electron-emitting member decreases.

Since all of the independent claims in the case recite at least one feature not understood to be disclosed or suggested by the citations to Kitamura et al. and Dean et al., Applicants submit that a prima face case of obviousness has not been established against the independent claims, and therefore Applicants respectfully request that 1) the rejection of independent Claims 5, 13, 18, and 22 be withdrawn and that these claims be allowed, and 2) new independent Claims 27-30 be allowed.

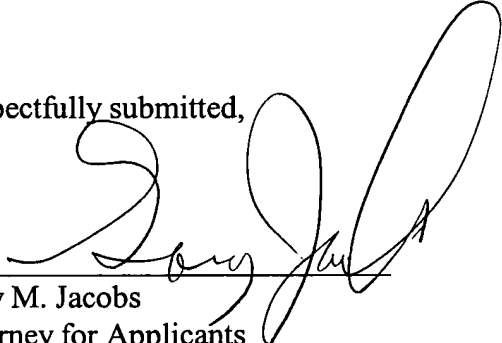
The dependent claims are allowable for the reasons given for the independent claims and because they recite features that are patentable in their own right. Individual consideration of the dependent claims is respectfully solicited.

Applicants respectfully request that this Amendment After Final be entered because the claim amendments contained herein render the application allowable, as indicated at the interview. In addition, given the Examiner's familiarity with the application, Applicants believe that a full understanding and consideration of this Amendment would not require undue time or effort by the Examiner. Accordingly, entry of this Amendment is believed to be appropriate and such entry is respectfully requested.

In view of the above amendments and remarks, the application is now in allowable form and entry of this Amendment is considered proper. Therefore, early passage to issue is respectfully solicited.

Applicants' undersigned attorney may be reached in our Washington, D.C. office by telephone at (202) 530-1010. All correspondence should continue to be directed to our below listed address.

Respectfully submitted,



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